

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 AGR-05 EB-07 SAM-01 ACDA-05 SCCT-01

OMB-01 /103 W

----- 023798

R 052339Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3457

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR MX IS

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON'S VISIT TO MEXICO

REF (A) 75 MEXICO 10595 (NOTAL), (B) MEXICO 1234 (NOTAL),
(C) MEXICO 1562 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER YIGAL ALLON
HANDLED HIMSELF WELL, HIS VISIT TO MEXICO FEB. 29 TO
MARCH 5 WILL NOT GO DOWN AS PUBLIC RELATIONS OR DIPLOMATIC
SUCCESS. AGREEMENTS TO STUDY BILATERAL COOPERATION IN CHEMICAL,
AGRICULTURAL, ELECTRICAL INDUSTRIES WHERE OVERSHADOWED BY
"AGREEMENT TO DISAGREE" ON MIDDLE EASTERN POLITICAL
ISSUES DURING ALLON'S MEETINGS WITH MEXICAN FOREIGN SECRETARY
ALFONSO GARCIA ROBLES. THEIR EXCHANGES WERE CHARACTERIZED
BY FRANKNESS, BARE MINIMUM OF DIPLOMATIC NICETIES AND
FREQUENT CLASHES OF VIEWS WHICH THREATENED TO DISRUPT
THEIR MEETINGS. OVERALL, IT APPEARS THAT ONLY THING
ALLONG WILL HAVE TO SHOW FOR POLITICAL RISK HE
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TOOK IN COMING HERE IS HIS STOUT DEFENSE OF ISRAELI VIEWS.

END SUMMARY.

2. AGREEMENT TO DISAGREE: FONSEC GARCIA ROBLES MADE IT CLEAR THAT GOM INTENDED TO KEEP ITS DISTANCE FROM ISRAEL IN HIS LUNCHEON SPEECH MARCH 2. MEXICO'S DETERMAINTION, HE SAID, TO TAKE POSITIONS BASE ON INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF WHAT WILL BEST CONTRIBUTE TO AND STRENGTHEN JUST PEACE, "INEVITABLEY MEANS THAT, AS HAS OCCURRED AT TIMES IN PAST, OCCASIONS WILL ARISE IN UN IN WHICH, UNFORTUNATELY, WE (I.E. ISRAEL AND MEXICO) HAVE HONEST DIFFERENCE OF OPINION. NEVERTHELESS, I HOLD CONVICTION THAT RECOGNITION OF THIS REALITY SHOULD NOT UPSET US, BECAUSE BETWEEN EQUALS THERE CAN BE NO INJURY WHEN ONE OR OTHER EXERCISES ITS INALIENABLE RIGHT TO TAKE POSITION AND ARRIVE AT DIFFERENT CONCLUSION.Z

3. ALTHOUGH ALLON PRESENTED ISRAEL'S VIEWS FORCEFULLY AND ARTICULATLEY, HE WAS OBVIOUSLY INCOMFORTABLE ABOUT THE OPEN CLASH OF OPINIONS WITH HIS HOST GARCIA ROBLES. ALLON MADE HIS DISCOMFORT KNOWN DURING JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ON MARCH 3: "I HAVE DISCOVERED THAT IT IS USUALLY EASIER FOR GOVERNMENTS TO SOLVE FOREIGN PROBLEMS RATHER THAN THEIR OWN...WE DO NOT NEED ADVICE. WE KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DO INORDER TO RESOLVE PROBLEM BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARAB COUNTRIES."

4. ONE OF MAJOR CLASHES DURING PRESS CONFERENCE OCCURRED OVER TWO MINSTERS' VIEWS ON PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION. ALLONOTED THAT PLO IS TERRORIST ORGANIZATION WHICH TAKES EXTREMIST POSITIONS, CALLS FOR DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL AS STATE, AND OPPOSES MODERATION ON MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEMS. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOM WOULD RECONSIDER ITS DECISON TO ALLOW PLO TO OPEN OFFICE IN MEXICO CITY. ALLON ALSO POINTED OUT THAT MAJORITY OF LAND AND PEOPLE IN JORDAN ARE PALESTINIAN AND THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS AND NEGOTIATE WITH JORDAN AND MODERATE PALESTINIANS BUT NOT WITH PLO. GARCIA ROBLES SAID THAT MEXICO WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FULFILL PROMISE MADE BY ECHEVERRIA TO ALLOW PLO TO OPEN OFFICE HERE (WITHOUT SAYING WHEN THIS WOULD OCCUR). HE ASLO SAID THAT IN OPINION OF GOM, OPENING OF PLO OFFICE HERE "WOULD NOT MEAN AN INCREASE IN DANGER EITHER FOR ISREAL OR FOR EVOLUTION TWOARD SETTLEMENT OF MIDDLE EASTERN QUESTION".

5. ANOTHER SERIOUS DIFFERENCE OF VIEWPOINTS OCCURRED WHEN GARCIA ROBLES AND ALLON PRESENTED THEIR VIEWS ON MEANING OF UN RESOLUTION 242. ALLON MAINTAINED THAT ONLY VALID VERSION OF RESOLUTION 242 WAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION WHICH REFERS TO RETURN OF "OCCUPIED TERRITORY". REPORTED NOTED THAT SPANISH VERSION SAYS "THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES" AND THAT THIS HAD BEEN INTERPRETATED MORE BROADLY. GARCIA ROBLES CONFIRMED THAT GOM PINTERPRETS IT BROADLY: "FOR MEXICO THE PHRASE 'THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES' IS INDEED SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE THE RESOLUTION IS WORDED THIS WAY IN SPANISH, AND FIVE AUTHORIZED LANGUAGES OF UN HAVE EQUAL VALIDITY FOR MEXICO." HE WNET ON TO SAY THAT BEFORE SECURITY COUNCIL VOTED ON THIS RESOLUTION, THE PRESIDENT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN BLOC IN THE UN, THE REPRESENTAIVE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, WAS ASKED WHETHER THIS PHRASE MEANT ALL THE TERRITORIES AND HE REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY. "THIS", HE CONCLUDED, "IS THE REASON FOR OUR INTERPREATION OF RESOLUTION 242."

6. ALLON WAS ALSO CRITICAL OF "AUTOMATIC MAJORITY" IN UN. HE NOTED THAT HIS COUNTRY COULD NOT OFFER PETROLEUM OR MONEY OR UN VOTES IN EXHCANGE FOR OTHER VOTES FAVORABLE TO ISRAELI POSITONS. "WE THING", HE SAID, "THAT IF WE OURSELVES (IN THE MIDDLE EAST) COULD SOLVE OUR OWN PROBLEMS IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER AND THIS (NON-INTERFERENCE) WOULD BE A GREAT HELP TO US ON THE PART OF THE THIRD WOLD."

7. WITH RESPECT TO EVENTS FOLLOWING THE UNGA VOTE NOV. 10, 1975, ALLON HAD SOME WARM WORDS FOR MEXICO: "AFTER MEXICO CLARIFIED ITS VOTE AGAINST ZIONISM IN THE UN, THE MEXICAN DELEGATION HAS OT RESUMED SUPPORT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE THESIS THAT ZIONISM IS RACISM, AND THIS IS ENCOURAGING." IN DICUSSING FORMER FONSEC RABASA'S VISIT TO ISRAEL LAST DEC, ALLON STATED THAT "RABASA NEVER APOLOGIZED OR ASKED FOR PARDON. HE ONLY FULFILLED HIS MISSION WHCIH CONSISTED OF CLARIFYING THE POSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTING MEXICO IN MANNER THAT MEXICANS SHOULD BE SATISFIED WITH." ALLON ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ONLH GOI RESPONSE TO MEXICAN VOTE WAS TO SEND NOTE OF PROTEST AND THAT TOURISM BOYCOTT OF MEXICO BY THE US JEWISH COMMUNITY WAS SOME-THING BEYOND THE GOI'S CONTROL. GARCIA ROBES' ONLY COMMENT ON THE MATTER WAS THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN A SUBJECT COVERED IN HIS PRIVATE TALKS WITH ALLON.

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USIA-06 AID-05 AGR-05 EB-07 SAM-01 ACDA-05 SCCT-01

OMB-01 /103 W

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R 052339Z MAR 76

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8. IN RESPONSE TO A REPORTER'S QUESTION ON WHETHER MEXICO WANTED TO MEDIATE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARABS, GARCIA ROBERS SAID: "I HAVE TO CONFESS THAT I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE THAT WE SOUGHT THIS MEDIATION (ROLE) AT ANY TIME. WHAT IS WELL KNOWN, AND AS PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAS SAID, IS THAT MEXICO IS READY, AND WE WOULD FIND IT A SOURCE OF SATISFACTION IF WE WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO STRENGTHENING A PEACE BASED ON JUSTICE."

9 ONE PRESS ACCOUNT INDICATES THAT THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ENDED ON A SOMEWHAT STRAINED NOTE WITH ALLEN AND GARCIA ROBLES COOLLY TAKING LEAVEOF EACH OTHER.

10. BILATERAL ISSUES: ALTHOUGH THE TWO GOVERNMENTS PROMISED TO STUDY POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC COOPERATION, NO CONCRETE AGREEMENTS WERE CONCLUDED. IN FACT, THE ARAVA AIRCRAFT ASSEMBLY PLANT (PARA 3 OF REC C) WAS

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NOT EVEN MENTIONED AS ONE OF THESE. EVEN THE GOM'S GESTURESSEEMED TO FALLY FLAT, POSSIBLY BY DESIGN, POSSIBLY NOT. FOR EXAMPLE, ALLON'S ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA BOTH WERE ONLY SPARESLY AND SPOTTILY COVERED IN THE PRESS (IN CONTRAST TO THE FRONT PAGE AND EXTENSIVE COVERAE OF HIS MEETINGS AND DISAGREEMENTS WITH GARCIA ROBLES).

11. ALLON'S ITINERARY: ALLON, WHO LEFT MEXICO CITY MARCH 3 TO GO TO THE YUCATAN PENINSULA AND VISIT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES, RETUNED HERE THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 4 AND MET WITH LOCAL JEWISH LEADERS THE SAME EVENING. IN A BREIF CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, AN ISRAELI DIPLOMAT EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE GOM'S TREATMENT OF ALLONAND SAID HE (ALLON) WILL NOT MEET WITH GOM OFFICIALS AGAIN BEFORE HE DEPARTS MEXICO ON MARCH 5. HE WILL MAKE A BRIEF STOP IN GUATEMALA AND THEN GO ON TO SAN JOSE FOR A MEETING WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADORS SERVING IN LATIN AMERICA.

12. COMMENT: WHILE MEXICAN-ISREALI RELATIONS ARE OFFICIALLY CORRECT AND CORDIAL, THEY SEEM TO BE MORE DISTANT AND STRAINED THAN THEY HAVE BEEN FOR YEARS EXCEPT OF COURSE AT THE TIME OF THE FAMOUS ZIONSIM VOTES. FOREIGN SECRETARY GARCIA ROBLES SEEKS MORE FIRMLY IN CONTROL OF FOREIGN RELATIONS THAT HIS PREDECESSOR, EMILIO RABASA, EVER WAS. ECHEVERRIA'S LOW PROFILE VIS-A-VIS THE ALLON VIST IS, TO SAY THE LEAST, UNUSUAL. ALL OF THIS MAY BE AN INDICATION OF HIS CONFIDENCE IN GARCIA ROBLES OR IT MAY BE THE RESULT OF A POLICY DECISION TO KEEP THE ISRAELIS AT ARMS LENGTH OR BOTH.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MEXICO03003
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760085-0604
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760391/aaaadbv.tel
Line Count: 261
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MEXICO 10595
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <08 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON'S VISIT TO MEXICO
TAGS: PFOR, MX, IS, XF, (ALLON, YIGAL), (GARCIA ROBLES, ALFONSO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006